

## X.—Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.

## 1. 'Annals of Scottish Natural History.'

[The Annals of Scottish Natural History. Nos. 47 & 48, July and October 1903.]

The first paper in the July number is by Mr. C. G. Cash, who gives an account of the Loch-an-Eilein Ospreys since 1895, the date up to which Mr. Harvie-Brown had summarized their history in the 'Vertebrate Fauna of the Moray Basin.' It is sad to learn, from a note by the Editors, that only one Osprey appeared at the old haunt in the spring of 1903, and that up to May 26th it was mateless. Mr. John Robertson contributes a paper on the birds of the island of Bute; and this is followed by the continuation of Mr. T. G. Laidlaw's Report on Movement and Migration in Scotland in 1902, which is concluded in the October number. That part also contains an extremely valuable article by Mr. Robert Service on Bird-migration in Solway—thoroughly deserving a careful perusal. Among the minor notices are records of Greenland Falcons in the Orkneys and Outer Hebrides, and of a Crane at the Pentland Skerries, which was shot, with reluctance, because of its devastation in the gardens. On Sunday it was spared, for intelligible reasons, but on Monday a renewal of the offence caused the close of its career.—H. S.

2. *Arrigoni degli Oddi on French and Italian Birds.*

[Materiali per una Bibliografia Ornitologica Italiana. Per Dott. E. Arrigoni degli Oddi. Atti Ist. Veneto, lxii. (1903) pp. 803-853.]

Deux mots sur la Buse féroce (*Buteo ferox*) tuée à Lyon en Octobre 1902. Par le Comte E. Arrigoni degli Oddi. Bull. Soc. Zool. France, xxviii. (1903) pp. 1831-40.]

The first article has been written chiefly for the assistance of Italian ornithologists, and to induce local naturalists to record the occurrence of rare species. Separate lists of works are given for (1) Italy in general, (2) Northern Italy, (3) Central Italy, (4) Southern Italy, (5) the Italian Islands (including Sicily and Malta), and subdivisions of the same. The list for Southern Italy is comparatively short.

In the second article the author takes the opportunity of enumerating various examples of *Buteo ferox* that have been procured on the Continent of Europe.

### 3. 'The Auk.'

[The Auk. A Quarterly Journal of Ornithology. Vol. xx. Nos. 3 & 4, July and October 1903.]

Mr. Spencer Trotter begins the July number of our contemporary with some notes on the birds observed by Peter Kaln, the Swedish botanist, during his travels in the eastern portions of North America between 1748 and 1751. In a paper by Mr. Witmer Stone, on the Generic Names of North-American Owls, the author expresses his regret at having "to work such a revolution in the nomenclature of such well-known birds" as the 'eared' owls, but he inserts the consoling clause that "if my views are adopted no change will be required in the genera of the 'earless' owls." Mr. Leverett M. Loomis, in a paper on the Recognition of Geographic Variation in Nomenclature, remarks that "the trick that ornithologists have of giving new names to familiar birds is an old trick, as old as the trade of ornithology"; but far more disquieting than the "old trick" is the modern "game of nomenclature," especially when the players are not agreed upon the meaning of the rules. Respect is, of course, due to the XIIth Supplement to the A. O. U. Check-list (pp. 331-368), which is, like its predecessors, the careful work of an authoritative Committee; moreover, the alterations in it refer chiefly to American species. An exception is *Erolia ferruginea*, but that is not such a mouthful as *Ancylocheilus arquata* for the Curlew-Sandpiper; but, oh! cursed spite, that ever this Old-World wader should have wandered to North America to have its name put right! In the latter part of the List about fifty species, of "questionable antecedents," are remanded for further inquiry.

Turning to field-ornithology, Mr. Allen Brooks contributes some interesting notes on the birds observed during fifteen months spent in the Cariboo district of British Columbia (roughly round lat. 52° N.), and among his discoveries were

five nests of the Waxwing (*Ampelis garrulus*). He gives a charming plate of the young of six species of Ducks, one of which, the Buffle-head, is an occasional visitor to our islands. Mr. Austin H. Clarké, who has already given a list of the birds of the island of Margarita, Venezuela, now furnishes some interesting notes on the habits of the species observed in that locality; and in the October number (p. 398) discusses the forms of the Black-winged Palm Tanager. Mr. William Brewster sends some further notes on *Vireo philadelphicus*, and illustrates them with a very pretty sketch of the nest and eggs. The island of Laysan is well known as the breeding-place of countless sea-birds, but Mr. Walter K. Fisher's notes on the more terrestrial species will be new to many of our readers. That a strong-billed Finch (*Telespiza cantans*) should peck a hole in a Tern's egg was hardly to be expected, and still less that a Rail (*Porzana palmeri*) lying in wait until the egg was perforated, should then drive away the Finch and appropriate the spoil. Photogravures of these performances, as well as of the nests of these and other species, are given. Mr. Robert E. Snodgrass has notes, with illustrations, on the anatomy of *Geospiza* and *Certhidea*—two genera which are characteristic of the Galápagos,—and also of *Cocornis*, a genus known only from Cocos, a small island lying off the Gulf of Panama, about four degrees north of the Equator. The results of several visits to some large and well-preserved colonies of the Herring-Gull on the Maine coast are described, with beautiful illustrations, by Messrs. W. Dutcher and W. J. Baily.—H. S.

#### 4. 'Avicultural Magazine.'

[Avicultural Magazine. The Journal of the Avicultural Society. New Series. Vol. i. No. 11. 1903.] Cf. Ibis, 1903, p. 607.

The present number contains an article by Mr. D. Seth-Smith on the Racket-tailed Parrot (*Prioniturus platurus*) with a coloured figure, an account of the Australian Honeyeaters by Mr. A. J. Campbell, a record by Mr. R. Phillipps of the nesting of the Waxwing in an aviary belonging to Mr. St. Quintin, and other contributions. It is interesting

to learn (p. 353) to what extent Honey-eaters can be fed on honey and water, and still more interesting must it have been to keep watch over the breeding Waxwings, which nested three times and on the second occasion hatched several young.

##### 5. *Blasius on the Great Auk.*

[Der Riesenalk. *Alca impennis* L. Neu bearbeitet von Geh. Hofrat Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Blasius in Braunschweig. (Sonderabdruck aus Naumann, Naturgeschichte der Vögel Mitteleuropas, Band xii.)]

As many of our readers know, there is now in process of issue, and in fact nearly completed, a so-called new folio edition of Naumann's celebrated 'Vögel Deutschlands,' which is really a fresh work on the same subject prepared by different authors. We have been favoured by our much esteemed friend and correspondent, Dr. Wilhelm Blasius, of Brunswick, with a copy of his memoir on the Great Auk (*Alca impennis*), which appears in the twelfth volume of the work in question; this we have great pleasure in introducing to the notice of British ornithologists who may not be acquainted with all that is written in Germany.

Dr. Blasius's elaborate essay is dedicated to Prof. Newton, "in grosser Verehrung und Dankbarkeit," and we may assume, therefore, with tolerable certainty, that it has not been prepared without the assistance of the greatest living authority on the subject. The memoir appears to us, so far as we can judge from a cursory examination, to contain a full *résumé* of what has been written on this much discussed question, while it is illustrated with five plates shewing the bird itself, its eggs, and its skeleton.

The synonymy of the Great Auk alone occupies seven pages, after which we find the description of the species, its geographical range (illustrated by several charts and sketches), the pursuit of it, its habits, its food, its reproduction, its enemies, and all its other attributes set forth at length and in proper order. The prices of the stuffed specimens, eggs, and skeletons of the famous bird which have been sold since 1832 are also fully discussed.



6. *Castle and Allen on Albinism.*

[The Heredity of Albinism. By W. E. Castle and Glover M. Allen. Proc. Amer. Ac. xxxviii. (1903) pp. 603-622.]

This paper contains a preliminary statement of the results of breeding experiments with mice, guinea-pigs, and rabbits conducted in the Zoological Laboratory of Harvard College during the last three years, with the addition of a bibliography of the subject. The student must be referred to the paper itself for precise details, but the conclusions may be here summarized as follows:—

1. Complete albinism behaves as a recessive character in heredity.

2. Partial albinism is a mosaic of dominant and recessive characters visible in the same individual.

3-6. The writers draw various inferences from the results obtained by breeding with mosaics.

7. Albinism, though apparently complete, may conceal traces of the pigment-forming character. Albinos thus constituted may be termed "impure recessives."

8. Cross-breeding can bring into activity latent elements, or may cause elements to become latent and remain so.

9. Substantiation of the Mendelian doctrine of gametic purity, except in so far as it is qualified by No. 8.

7. *Dubois' 'Synopsis Avium.'*

[Synopsis Avium. Nouveau Manuel d'Ornithologie par Alphonse Dubois. Fasc. XI, XII. 1902; Fasc. XIII., XIV. 1903.]

Since we last reported on this work ('Ibis,' 1902, p. 661) four more fascicules have been issued, containing the remainder of the Pigeons and the whole of the families of the Ptilopædes and Ratitæ. The total number of species catalogued in the three "Subclasses" is 12,000, besides 3327 subspecies or "varieties," as the author prefers to call them. In fascicule xiv. a supplement containing additions and corrections is commenced, and, if we understand rightly, the next fascicule will conclude the work.

## 8. 'The Emu.'

[The Emu, a Quarterly Magazine to popularize the Study and Protection of Native Birds. Vol. iii. pt. 1 (July 1903), pls. i.-iv.]

Besides the usual minor contributions this part of 'The Emu' contains a study of variation by Capt. Hutton, based on the Cormorants of New Zealand, with speculations as to their genealogy and the original habitat of their ancestors. The writer is inclined to attribute many peculiar characters to reversion, and to minimize the effect of Natural Selection and "use-inheritance."

Mr. A. W. Milligan furnishes three articles on Western Australia. The first treats of a trip to the Stirling Range during September and October, with particulars of the discovery of the new species *Calamanthus montanellus* and *Melithreptus leucogenys* (cf. 'Ibis,' 1903, p. 612), and gives a list of 70 species, including the rare *Malurus pulcherrimus* and *Ptilotis cratitia*. The nests and eggs of *Petroeca campbelli* and *Calyptorhynchus baudini* were also found. The second article is devoted to Lake Yanchep and the new *Megalurus striatus* (cf. 'Ibis,' l. s. c.). The third contains a description of two new species, *Xerophila castaneiventris* and *Acanthiza robustirostris*, from Day Dawn, Murchison.

Mr. D. Le Souëf continues his paper on Birds' Eggs from the Port Darwin District, North Australia, with accounts of those of *Rhipidura phasiana* (new to science), *R. dryas*, *Ptilosclera versicolor*, and *Platycercus amathusia*.

Mr. F. M. Littler furnishes notes of considerable length on some birds peculiar to Tasmania; Mr. T. Carter writes on those of the North-west Cape Region and the south-west of Western Australia; Mr. R. Hall on a collection from the Fitzroy River, North-west Australia, and on the plumage of *Ptilotis leucotis*; Mr. E. M. Cornwall on a trip to Oyster Cay, Upolu Reef, and Green Island; and Mr. H. Kendall on vernacular names.

The plates illustrate the home of *Calamanthus montanellus*, the nests of *Anus superciliosa* and *Calyptorhynchus baudini*, and a colony of Sooty Terns at Upolu Reef.

9. *Evans's 'Turner on Birds.'*

[Turner on Birds: a short and succinct History of the principal Birds noticed by Pliny and Aristotle, first published by Doctor William Turner, 1544. Edited, with Introduction, Translation, Notes, and Appendix, by A. H. Evans, M.A., Clare College, Cambridge. 8vo. Cambridge, University Press. 1903. Price 6s. net.]

Curiosity, to use no stronger word, concerning the ancient, often-cited, and little-seen work of William Turner, may now be easily gratified, as a reprint, with a translation and notes, has been published by the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press. It would hardly be becoming in these pages to speak of the Editor's treatment of his author, except to remark that the temptation to annotation has been strongly resisted; but some few of the more interesting and important facts which Turner tells us may be briefly mentioned. Advanced as he was in his opinions, he could hardly be expected to be free from the prevalent fiction as to the origin of Bernacle Geese, but there is a touch of redeeming humour in his statement that he should not have believed it had he not been assured of its truth on oath by an Irish divine, though that divine, alas! failed to fulfil his promise of submitting proofs of the same to Turner himself. The reader is left to draw the inference. Of somewhat like nature was the author's interview with the old Swiss goatherd, who told of the birds which not only milked his flock, but struck some of them blind, though fortunately these noxious birds had all flown away to carry on their evil practices in Lower Germany, where they were known by a name signifying "priests." Turner got into trouble over the Bittern, though he knew it well enough, mixing it up with the Pelican—owing to some confusion between booming and braying, for the latter was said to have the voice of an ass; but he very accurately made known to his countrymen the appearance of the Stork, which they had only seen as a captive. He was the first to publish a notice of the *Nucifraga*, which he had seen in the Rhætic Alps, where the people well knew its habits. His personal testimony to the breeding of the Crane in England, "where I myself have very often seen their

pipers," as the translation runs, of course cannot be passed over here, often as reference to it may have been made. Another statement of his is perhaps of still greater interest to ornithology at large. Turner in Switzerland had actually handled the mysterious *Waltrapus*, as he Latinizes its German name—the "Waldrapp," though his recollection of it was imperfect; and thus his notice antedates that of Gesner by eleven years. Yet it would seem as if the two naturalists had already held friendly consultation about this bird, for Turner's remarks upon it anticipate what Gesner afterwards published, though the latter differed from his predecessor, who regarded it as the *Phalacrocorax* of Pliny. So indeed did Belon in 1555, as his figure shews (*Hist. de la Nature des Oiseaux*, p. 162), though he confounded it with a Cormorant—a point which seems to have been overlooked by most writers on *Geronticus* or *Comatibis eremita*. The greatest puzzle in Turner's book, however, is perhaps what may have been the English word which he writes in Latin form *Fedoa*, the equivalent of Godwit, used long after by Linnæus as the trivial name of one of the American species of *Limosa*. To Turner, also, we are indebted for the word *Sterna*, originally the local name, in some parts of England at least, for *S. nigra*, of whose breeding-places he gives a lively account:—

"Through the whole of summer, at which time it breeds, it makes such an unconscionable noise that by its unrestrained clamour it almost deafens those who live near lakes and marshes. This I certainly believe to be the bird whose vile garrulity gave rise to the old proverb *Larus parturit*. It is almost always flying over lakes and swamps, never at rest, but always open-mouthed for prey. This bird breeds in thick reed-beds."

That is a picture more than three hundred and fifty years old. It is just half a century since *S. nigra* laid an egg in England!

With this we must conclude our notice; but there is hardly a page in the book which does not invite a commentary, and we believe that it will be found extremely interesting



by many of our readers, while the Editor has certainly done his best to make it acceptable to them. His Introduction contains a sketch of the author's life, passages from his friend Gesner's great work, in which Turner is mentioned, a list of the birds determined by him arranged under Families so as to be readily found, and an Appendix containing extracts, with translations, from John Caius's work of 1570, wherein eleven species of birds are treated, and finally a full index to the whole.

Now we would offer a friendly challenge to our German brethren. We have taken from them an English author whom they have long held in captivity. Why should they not generously retaliate by setting free a prisoner—nay, two prisoners—of their own nation, and give us a reprint of the *Appellationes Volucrum* of Eber and Peucer? It is said to have been published first at Wittenburg in 1551, but we have never set eyes on a copy bearing an earlier date than 1575. It is often quoted by Gesner, and that in itself is a recommendation.—A. N.

#### 10. *Goeldi's Album of Amazonian Birds.*

[Album de Aves Amazonicas organizado pelo Professor Dr. Emilio A. Goeldi. 2<sup>do</sup> fasciulo. Pará, 1902.]

We have already noticed ('Ibis,' 1902, pp. 149, 510) the first part of Dr. Goeldi's 'Album.' The second part contains illustrations, printed in colours, of the Amazonian Cotingas, Manikins, Parrots, Woodpeckers, Ant-eaters, Curassows, and many other birds, and is quite up to the same high standard. The work will, no doubt, serve its purpose of calling attention to the rich and varied Avifauna of Amazonia.

#### 11. *Hartert on the Birds of the Key and South-east Islands.*

[On the Birds of the Key and South-east Islands and of Ceram-laut. By Ernst Hartert. Nov. Zool. x. p. 232 (1903).]

Mr. Hartert now gives us his third and final article on the birds collected by Mr. Heinrich Kühn on the Key group and other islands south-east of Ceram (*cf.* 'Ibis,' 1901, pp. 503, 726), bringing up the total to 150 species and subspecies.

Five specimens of *Phylloscopus borealis* are registered as having been obtained in these islands (Tooer and Maar) in November and December 1899.

### 12. Hartert on the Birds of the Rio de Oro.

[List of Birds collected at Rio de Oro by Mr. F. W. Riegenbach. By Ernst Hartert. Nov. Zool. x. p. 295 (1903).]

The Rio de Oro, a so-called "Spanish Colony" on the coast of North-west Africa between Morocco and Senegal, has hitherto been, so far as we know, quite an unexplored district as regards its birds. But Herr Riegenbach appears to have visited it at the wrong time of year, and not to have penetrated into the interior, so that, as Mr. Hartert well observes, his collection of birds is poor and unsatisfactory. It consists of examples of 18 species, which, so far as they go, would shew that the Avifauna is "quite Palaearctic and not tropical." All the species are European and Algerian forms, such as *Hypolais polyglotta*, *Saxicola leucura*, *Otocorys bilopha*, *Motacilla raii*, *Cypselus apus*, and *Upupa epops*. It is possible, however, that a visit to the interior of Rio de Oro in spring might lead to results of a more interesting character.

### 13. Hellmayr on new or little-known South-American Birds.

[Ueber neue und wenig bekannte südamerikanische Vögel. Von C. E. Hellmayr (München). Verh. zool.-bot. Gesellsch. Wien, 1903, p. 199.]

Herr Hellmayr's studies on South-American birds are based mainly on the unrivalled series obtained by Natterer, now in the Vienna Museum, but he acknowledges much assistance from specimens lent to him by several kind friends.

Beginning with the Pipridæ, the author describes a new subspecies of *Pipra isidorii* from Northern Peru as *P. isidorii leucopygia*, likewise a new species of the group of *P. opalians* as *P. gracilis*. The latter is based on a single female specimen from Engenho de Gama, in Matto Grosso, obtained by Natterer in 1826. He then proceeds to arrange the

complicated synonyms of the three species of *Scotothorus* (nuper *Heteropelma*), and gives the new name *S. sulphureiventris* to one of them from Matto Grosso and Bolivia.

Proceeding to the Tyrannidæ the author describes the unknown male of *Haplocercus hollandi* Sel., which has a very curious wing-structure, and characterizes as new *Euscarthmus nattereri* from a Nattererian specimen from Paraná. The difficult genus *Rhynchocyclus* is now attacked, and two new subspecies, *R. poliocephalus sclateri* and *R. flaviventris borbæ*, are separated.

Among the Formicariidæ the author makes many critical remarks on the species of the genera *Herpsilochmus*, *Myrmotherula*, *Myrmeciza*, *Phlogopsis*, *Dysithamnus*, and *Thamnophilus*, and describes as new species or subspecies *Herpsilochmus roraimæ*, *Myrmotherula berlepschi*, *Thamnopkilus nigricristatus difficilis*, *Grallaria varia cinereiceps*, and *G. berlepschi*.

Of the family Dendrocolaptidæ, *Picolaptes bivittatus bahiæ* and *Philydor rufipileatus maynani* are described as new. Finally, the South-American Mocking-birds are revised, and two new subspecies, *Mimus saturninus frater* and *M. longicaudatus punensis*, are proposed.

#### 14. *Hellmayr on the Paridæ, Sittidæ, and Certhiidæ.*

[Das Tierreich, &c. Lief. 18. Aves. Paridæ, Sittidæ, und Certhiidæ, bearbeitet von C. E. Hellmayr in München. Berlin: Friedländer u. Sohn, 1903. Pp. 256. Price 17s.]

The last part of the 'Tierreich' relating to Birds was Dr. Finsch's "Zosteropidæ" (see 'Ibis,' 1902, p. 661), dated 1901. After more than a year's interval comes the present part, from a young and ardent ornithologist now settled, we hope definitely, at Munich, where a votary of our special branch of zoology was much required. It is devoted to three families well known to all of us—the Tits, Nuthatches, and Tree-creepers. Of these the Paridæ (under which head the author arranges the Regulinæ, Polioptilinæ, and Paradoxornithinæ, besides the typical Parinæ) are by far the most numerous, and occupy the greater part of the volume. We are pleased to see that the numerous subdivisions into

which some recent workers have split the old genus *Parus* (11 in all) are used only as subgenera, and that the "subspecies," though carefully enumerated, are not given quite the same rank as the species. Thus 12 subspecies of *Parus palustris* are recognised, 11 of *Parus ater*, and 7 of *Parus cæruleus*. Altogether 66 species of *Parus* are allowed, besides the subspecies, and 114 species are placed in the subfamily Parinæ. The Regulinæ number 11, the Polioptilinæ 13, and the Paradoxornithinæ 24, so that the total number of the family Paridæ would be about 162. Whether *Chamaea* can be correctly placed among the true Parinæ is, we think, a little doubtful, but we believe that its affinities are Parine. The generic name *Psittiparus* is proposed for *Paradoxornis flavirostris* Gould and some allied species. In the Sittidæ Herr Hellmayr includes besides *Sitta* (with 23 species), *Neositta* with 9 species, and *Daphænositta* and *Hypositta* with 1 species each—making altogether 34 species of the family. "*Neositta*" is a new name proposed by Herr Hellmayr (J. f. O. 1901, p. 187) in place of *Sittella*, because Rafinesque is supposed to have suggested *Sittella* as an equivalent for *Sitta* in 1815. But this seems to be a very unnecessary change, Rafinesque's silly names being unknown and hardly adopted by anyone. *Sitta europæa* is subdivided by Herr Hellmayr into 12 subspecies. Of the third family here treated, the Certhiidae, the author recognises 4 genera, *Certhia*, *Salpornis*, *Tichodroma*, and *Climacteris*, with 27 species altogether. But *Certhia familiaris* is subdivided into 12 subspecies, amongst which is *Certhia familiaris britannica* (sic!) of Ridgway. To *Certhia brachydactyla* of Brehm full rank as a species is given. Now we will ask, how many Members of the B. O. U. could distinguish *C. brachydactyla* from *C. familiaris* or *C. britannica* (we will omit the second *t*) from either of them?

But such criticisms are mere details, and those of our readers who consult Herr Hellmayr's contribution to the 'Tierreich' will find it a very careful and accurate piece of work, and will agree with us that it does the author great credit.



15. *Huber on the Materials of the Nest of Ostinops decumanus.*

[Sobre os materiais do ninho do Japú (*Ostinops decumanus*). Por Dr. J. Huber. Bol. Mus. Paraense, vol. iii. p. 328 (1902).]

This is the paper alluded to by Dr. Goeldi in his letter published in the last number of our Journal ('Ibis,' 1903, p. 632), in which the material used by the Great Caeique (*Ostinops decumanus*) in building its nest was shown to be a rhizomorph of the genus *Marasmius*, and not the fibre of *Tillandsia usneoides*. The structural differences between these two vegetable substances are fully pointed out and figured.

16. '*Irish Naturalist.*'

[The Irish Naturalist. A Monthly Journal of General Irish Natural History. Edited by G. H. Carpenter, R. L. Praeger, and Robert Patterson. Vol. xii. Nos. 1-12. Eason & Sons, Dublin.]

The ornithological feature of the volume for 1903 is Mr. E. Williams's paper on the breeding of the Red-necked Phalarope in the west of Ireland, with an illustration of the adult and young birds. The locality is kept secret, but inasmuch as a Government official has given an open order for Irish eggs of the Red-throated Diver, there is little chance of the Phalarope escaping for long. This species was not known even as a visitor to Ireland before 1891; and on its breeding-history and migrations Mr. J. A. Harvie-Brown contributes an interesting paper (p. 96). It is sad, but not at all surprising, to learn from Mr. Robert Warren of the neglected condition of the valuable collection of Irish birds bequeathed to Queen's College, Cork, by the late Dr. J. R. Harvey. Mr. C. B. Moffat moots a new theory, which conflicts to a considerable extent with the views of Darwin. The author enters upon an enquiry into the reason of different species which breed in a particular district not shewing any perceptible increase in numbers from year to year; and he attributes the fact rather to lack of space than to mortality among individuals. He thinks that there may be more "bachelors" and "old maids" among birds than is

usually supposed, and that the males fight in spring not so much for the females as for the command of a particular locality. Moreover, he believes that the cock's song may be primarily intended for a challenge, and that bright colours may act as "warnings" to rivals. We confess, however, that we are unable to understand where all Mr. Moffat's unpaired birds hide themselves, nor can we agree that all the available breeding-stations are fully occupied. Mr. Nevin H. Foster continues his observations on the weight of birds' eggs, and adds thirteen species to his former list. Among the rarities the most important is *Acrocephalus aquaticus*, the first specimen recorded for Ireland, received by Mr. R. M. Barrington from the Bull Rock lighthouse, where it struck the lantern on September 20th last. This is yet another instance of the value of these lighthouse- and lightship-observations which Mr. Barrington has fostered. The occurrence of a Great Bustard, the discovery of remains of the Great Auk in Co. Clare, and the migrations of the White Wagtail are among the many records worthy of notice.—H. S.

#### 17. *Loudon's Ornithological Journey in Central Asia.*

[Ergebnisse einer ornithologischen Sammelreise nach Zentral-Asien (1901). Von Harald, Baron Loudon. Ornith. Jahrb. 1901-3.]

Baron Loudon has kindly sent us a separate copy of an account of his adventurous ornithological journey into Central Asia, which has appeared in several numbers of the 'Ornithologisches Jahrbuch,' and we have looked through it with much interest. The author travelled by way of the Caucasus to Baku, and crossing the Caspian to Krassnovodsk traversed the trans-Caspian railway to Merv, stopping at several selected stations on the line. From Merv an excursion was made southwards along the branch-line to Kuschik, and the Russo-Persian frontier-lands were explored. It is obvious that the numerous observations on birds which Baron Loudon made throughout his journey must be of great interest to ornithologists, and we commend them to all students of the Palæarctic Ornis. Baron Loudon frequently

mentions Zarudny (whose acquaintance he made in Askabad), and his enormous series of specimens collected in various parts of this district. It is a misfortune that Zarudny's 'Ornithological Fauna of the Transcaspian Region' (Moscow, 1896) is written in Russian, and is therefore inaccessible to most Western ornithologists.

### 18. *Macoun on Canadian Birds.*

[Catalogue of Canadian Birds. Part II. By John Macoun. Ottawa, 1903. 8vo. Pp. i-v, 219-413. Price 10 cents.]

The second part of Mr. Macoun's Catalogue, issued, as before (see 'Ibis,' 1901, p. 505), under the supervision of the authorities of the Geological Survey of Canada, contains the Orders *Raptores*, *Coccyges*, *Pici*, *Macrochires*, and *Passeres* (pt.). Since the publication of the first part much valuable information has been obtained with regard to Alaska, British Columbia, Labrador, and the Hudson Bay region from Messrs. W. H. Osgood, A. Brooks, H. B. Bigelow, S. N. Rhoads, and others; while Messrs. Spreadborough, J. M. Macoun, and the members of the Geological staff generally have shown considerable activity in various parts of the Dominion, the limits of which for ornithological purposes have been extended to Alaska and Greenland. A specially remarkable record is that of the occurrence in the far north of the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Milvulus forficatus*), a characteristically southern species.

### 19. *Madarász on Venezuelan Birds.*

[Description of some new Birds from Venezuela. By Dr. Julius v. Madarász. Ann. Mus. Nat. Hungar. 1902, pp. 462-464.]

The new species described are *Elainea gularis* from Escorial, *Cinclodes heterurus* from Culata, San Antonio, and Valle, *Siptornis certhia* from San Antonio and Santo Domingo, *Synallaxis occipitalis* from Escorial and Valle, and *Dendrexetastes berlepschi* from Culata. The last-named somewhat resembles *Xiphocolaptes promeropirhynchus*, and woodcuts of the bill are given to shew the difference.

20. *Oates and Reid on Birds' Eggs.*

[Catalogue of the Collection of Birds' Eggs in the British Museum (Natural History). Vol. III. Carinatae (Psittaciformes--Passeriformes). By Eugene W. Oates, assisted by Capt. Savile G. Reid. London: 1903. Price 25s.]

Owing to the unfortunate illness of Mr. Oates (the author of the first two volumes of this Catalogue), the MS. of the third volume, which he had nearly finished, has been finally revised by Capt. Savile Reid, whose qualifications for such a task are well known. The general style and arrangement are exactly the same as those of the two previous volumes.

The order observed is, as before, that of the Hand-list; and after the name of the species only a few synonyms, specially referring to nests and eggs, are given. Then follows a description of the egg and a list of the specimens of it in the British Museum, with localities, dates, and authorities. Under the headings of the Orders, Families, and sometimes Genera short remarks are inserted concerning the characteristic shape, structure, and colour of the eggs of the members of the groups in question; and these are particulars on which, we think, a little more information might have been given. For instance, in the case of the Irrisoridæ, although the eggs of this important Family are not represented in the series, it would have been easy to call attention to a *desideratum* in a few lines, and to say how important it is to fill up this *hiatus valdè deflendus*!

The third volume of the 'Catalogue of Eggs' commences with the Parrots, and carries us on through what for shortness (at least) we may still call the Picarians. The Mesomyodian Passeres are taken next, and then comes the commencement of the Oscines. The eggs of 907 species (represented by 8474 specimens) are described in this volume. Ten well-coloured plates illustrate some of the most remarkable forms. But we may venture to express a regret that each plate should not have been confined to the eggs of a particular group, with the names of the species printed on the plates instead of being "explained" in a separate list of figures.



21. *Ogilvie-Grant and Forbes on the Birds of Socotra and Abd-el-Kuri.*

[The Natural History of Sokotra and Abd-el-Kuri. A Monograph of the Islands. Edited by Henry O. Forbes, LL.D. Liverpool, 1903. Aves by W. R. Ogilvie-Grant and Henry O. Forbes.]

This volume contains the results of the expedition to Socotra and Abd-el-Kuri undertaken in the winter of 1898-99 by Mr. Ogilvie-Grant, representing the British Museum, and Dr. Forbes, representing the Liverpool Museum, and the section "Aves" has been written by these two gentlemen.

The number of birds collected by the expedition was 437: 396 on Socotra and 41 on the smaller island of Abd-el-Kuri, which lies between Socotra and Cape Guardafui. The species represented in the collection are 50: 40 from Socotra and 10 from Abd-el-Kuri. Previous authorities had recorded 20 more species from Socotra, examples of which were not met with on the present occasion. On the other hand, Messrs. Ogilvie-Grant and Forbes have added 9 species to the Socotran list, 5 of which (namely, *Fringillaria insularis*, *F. socotrana*, *Caprimulgus jonesi*, *Scops sumatranus*, and *Phalacrocorax nigrigularis*) have been described as new to science. They also discovered 3 new species on Abd-el-Kuri, namely, *Amydrus creaghi*, *Passer hemileucus*, and *Motacilla forwoodi*.

Altogether 67 species are catalogued in the present work as found in Socotra by the authors or by previous authorities, and 22 from Abd-el-Kuri; while good field-notes are given upon such of them as were observed. Five coloured plates contain figures of *Fringillaria socotrana*, *F. insularis*, *Caprimulgus jonesi*, *Scops socotranus*, *Phalacrocorax nigrigularis*, *Passer hemileucus*, and *Motacilla forwoodi*.

The avifauna of these islands is, as might have been expected, purely Ethiopian, with a few representative species more or less differentiated. The strong-billed Sparrow *Rhynchostruthus socotrensis* is perhaps the most prominent feature in the Socotran Ornis; but a closely allied, though smaller form (*R. louisæ*), occurs in Somaliland.

22. *Rothschild and Hartert on Papuan Birds.*

[Notes on Papuan Birds. By the Hon. Walter Rothschild, Ph.D., and Ernst Hartert. Nov. Zool. x. p. 196 (1903).]

The authors continue their instructive notes on Papuan Birds (see 'Ibis,' 1903, p. 428), of which the Tring Museum has a very rich series. The Meropidae, Coraciidae, Podargidae, and Caprimulgidae are first discussed, and the ranges of the species are specially indicated. The Passerine families Campophagidae, Nectariniidae, Dicaeidae, Motacillidae, Sylviidae, and Timeliidae follow, and the following species and subspecies are described as new:—*Edoliosoma melas tommasonis*, *E. m. meekii*, *E. meyeri sharpei*, *Dicaeum geelvinckianum diversum*, *Myzomela eques nymani*, and *Sericornis pusilla*. Our friends will pardon us if we protest against such a barbarous name as "*tommasonis*," when there is an excellent Latin genitive "*thomasi*" in ordinary use: we are sure that the veteran ornithologist whom it is intended to honour will not be pleased with it. A complete list of the *Myzomela* is given, and 42 species and subspecies are enumerated, with their localities.

23. *Seth-Smith on Parrakeets.*

[Parrakeets: being a Practical Handbook to those Species kept in Captivity. By David Seth-Smith, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U. Part 6. Pp. i-xx, 217-281; 3 pls. London: R. H. Porter, 1903. Price 6s. net.]

We congratulate Mr. Seth-Smith on the successful completion of this useful work, which ought to be in the hands of all those who keep Parrots. It furnishes a reliable compendium of our present knowledge of the imported species, both as regards their habits in the wild state and their management in the aviary, while the plates will be a boon to ornithologists generally. The species treated in this concluding part are *Neophema elegans*, *N. chrysogastra*, *N. petrophila*, *N. pulchella* (col. pl.), *N. splendida* (col. pl.), *Cyanoramphus unicolor* (col. pl.), *C. novae-zealandiae*, *C. saisseti*, *C. auriceps* (col. pl.), *C. malherbii*, *Nymphicus cornutus* (fig. of head), *N. urvænsis*, *Nanodes discolor*, *Melopsittacus undulatus*, *Pezoporus terrestris* (fig.), *Geopsittacus occidentalis*, and

*Plilosclera versicolor* (col. pl.). A general and a systematic index are added, and also an appendix, in which, among other items, details are given of the rearing in captivity of the young of *Platyercus erythropeplus*, which is proved to be a hybrid between *P. elegans* and *P. eximius*. *P. mastersianus* is, moreover, considered to be a variety of *P. elegans*.

24. Sharpe's 'Hand-list of Birds,' vol. iv.

[A Hand-list of the Genera and Species of Birds. (Nomenclator Avium tum Fossilium tum Viventium.) By R. Bowdler Sharpe, LL.D., Assistant Keeper, Department of Zoology, British Museum. Vol. IV. London, 1903. Pp. xii+392. Price 10s.]

The third volume of the 'Hand-list' was issued in 1901, as already recorded in this Journal (see 'Ibis,' 1902, p. 159). In the fourth volume, published in September last, Dr. Bowdler Sharpe continues the enumeration of the Acromyodian Passeres, and treats of the following families:—

	No. of genera.	No. of species.
Fam. V. Timeliidæ . . . . .	122	575
VI. Troglodytidæ . . . . .	22	256
VII. Cinclidæ . . . . .	1	19
VIII. Mimidæ . . . . .	14	71
IX. Turdidæ . . . . .	75	598
X. Sylviidæ . . . . .	76	523
XI. Vireonidæ . . . . .	6	111
XII. Ampelidæ . . . . .	5	10
XIII. Artamidæ . . . . .	2	20
XIV. Vangidæ . . . . .	6	12
XV. Prionopidæ . . . . .	16	95
XVI. Aerocharidæ . . . . .	1	1
XVII. Laniidæ . . . . .	33	321
XVIII. Paridæ . . . . .	24	209
XIX. Chamæidæ . . . . .	1	3
XX. Regulidæ . . . . .	4	20
XXI. Sittidæ . . . . .	5	60
XXII. Certhiidæ . . . . .	5	39
	418	2943

It will thus be seen that the average number of species to a genus is about 7. This seems to be rather a low average. We believe that the number of genera admitted in Zoology might be considerably reduced, and with great advantage.

Botanists are not afraid in some cases (*e. g.* the genus *Senecio*) to put nearly 1000 species under the same generic head.

We add a few remarks upon some of the generic terms employed in the fourth volume of the 'Hand-list.'

We do not think that the well-known generic name *Hylophilus* should be rejected in favour of *Pachysylvia* because a genus of Insects had been previously named *Hylophila*. *Picus* and *Pica* are habitually used for two different genera of Birds, and *Hylophilus* has a still greater claim to be maintained, because its rival *Hylophila* relates to a different Class of Animals. Dr. Sharpe would have done better, in our opinion, not to have followed Mr. Oberholser's suggestion on this subject.

We also think that Mr. Oberholser's "correction" of "*Aerocharis*" in place of the well-established name "*Euryceros*" need not have been attended to. *Aerocharis*, we are able to inform Dr. Sharpe, was proposed by Gistel (*Nat. Thierr.* p. ix) in 1848 as a substitute for *Euryceros*, Lesson, 1830, apparently because "*Eurycera*" had been previously used in Entomology by Fabricius. But in our opinion, as in the case last referred to, it is quite unnecessary to alter a well-known name on such trivial grounds.

On a third point in generic nomenclature we have the pleasure of agreeing with Dr. Sharpe. It is certainly very doubtful whether Meyer intended his term "*Phyllopeustæ*," used in the plural number for a division of the genus *Sylvia*, to be employed in a generic sense; and we therefore quite agree to the maintenance of the well-known term *Phylloscopus*, Boie, 1826, for the "Leaf-Warblers," as they may be appropriately called—a course followed by Mr. Dresser in his 'Manual.' The term "*Phyllopeuste*" used by some authors originated in a misprint of *Phyllopeuste*, made by Boie in the 'Isis' (1828, p. 321).

#### 25. *Shufeldt on the Osteology of the Steganopodes.*

[The Osteology of the Steganopodes. By R. W. Shufeldt, M.D., Mem. Carnegie Mus. vol. i. no. 3. Pittsburgh, Pa., U.S.A. Quarto. Pp. 116.]

This is another of Dr. Shufeldt's memoirs on the Osteology



of Birds, which the author has unfortunately found it necessary to publish in several forms and in different periodicals. In a uniform and connected series they would have been of much greater value.

The result arrived at is that the Order Steganopodes is composed of 3 "Superfamilies"—Pelecanoidea, Phaëthontoidea, and Fregatoidea. To the first of these belong the four families Pelecanidæ, Phalacrocoracidæ, Anhingidæ, and Sulidæ; while the other two are based upon the genera *Phaëthon* and *Fregata*, which constitute respectively the families Phaëthontidæ and Fregatidæ.

Ten plates, reproduced from photographs, illustrate this memoir.

26. *Tschusi zu Schmidhoffen on Austrian and Hungarian Birds.*

[Ornithologische Kollektaneen aus Oesterreich-Ungarn und dem Occupations-Gebiete. Von Victor Ritter von Tschusi zu Schmidhoffen. Ornith. Monatsb. xxviii. (1903) pp. 59-67, 297-306.]

Ornithologische Literatur Oesterreich-Ungarns und des Okkupationsgebietes 1901. Von Viktor Ritter v. Tschusi zu Schmidhoffen. Verh. z.-b. Ges. Wien, 1903, pp. 271-285.]

The first two of these articles contain further records of the occurrence of various species (24 and 33 respectively) in Austria Hungary and the Occupation-Territory, with short notes. The third is a useful list of works published in 1901 on the birds of the same countries.

27. *Winge on the Birds of the Danish Lighthouses, 1902.*

[Fuglene ved de danske Fyr i 1902. 20de Aarsberetning om danske Fugle. Ved Herluf Winge. Vidensk. Meddel. fra den naturh. Foren. i Kbhvn. 1903, pp. 335-387.]

This is the twentieth of the excellent series of reports on the birds met with at the Danish lighthouses, and relates to the year 1902, during which 750 specimens of 50 species were sent to Copenhagen from 30 localities. These are all discussed in the usual thorough manner. The four most abundant victims of the Danish lighthouses appear to be *Alauda arvensis*, *Sturnus vulgaris*, *Turdus musicus*, and *Erithacus rubecula*.